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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 607

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Osta M. Underwood of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Osta M. Underwood; and

WHEREAS, Miss Underwood was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, for many years, she served with acumen and alacrity as an attorney and insurance executive, earning the respect of her peers and clients alike for the exemplary quality of her work; and

WHEREAS, the daughter of Sidney R. and Edith K. Underwood and a graduate of Central High School in Knoxville, she attended the Nashville Business College and later studied at the YMCA Night Law School; she obtained her license to practice law in 1936; and

WHEREAS, Miss Underwood later attended the American College of Life Underwriters; she earned advanced certificates in Estate Planning and Pension and Profit Sharing Plans and, in 1955, became a Certified Life Underwriter; and

WHEREAS, generations of Nashvillians looked to Miss Underwood for legal help and for assistance in financial matters; her wise judgment and heartfelt concern were assets to the community that will not easily be replaced; and

WHEREAS, a pioneer among women professionals, Miss Underwood was one of America's foremost advocates for women's issues, and she also generously devoted her time and talents to benefit the disabled; and

WHEREAS, her tireless devotion and wise counsel led to her being appointed to numerous committees and boards on the local, state, and national levels; and

WHEREAS, under Mayor Richard Fulton, she served as Chairwoman of the Employee Benefit Board, and she was a member of the Code Administration's Board of Appeals during Mayor Beverly Briley's tenure; and

WHEREAS, Governor Frank Clement selected her to serve on his Committee for Employment of the Handicapped, and Governor Winfield Dunn appointed her to his Commission for the Status of Women; and

WHEREAS, Miss Underwood's expertise and ability were so renowned that she attained national prominence; as a result, President Lyndon Baines Johnson selected her to serve on his Committee for Employment of the Handicapped, and President Richard Nixon requested her service on the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare's Advisory Committee on the Rights and Responsibilities of Women, as did his successor, President Gerald Ford; and

WHEREAS, Osta Underwood was a diligent and determined community servant and a visionary advocate for societal reform; she was an active member of the Equal Rights Amendment Task Force, and she served with distinction as President of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, other praiseworthy civic endeavors in which Miss Underwood participated include her invaluable activities in support of the 5th District Republican Women's Club and the Women's Political Caucus; additionally, she was a founding member of the Lawyers Association for Women in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Osta Underwood was long recognized as one of Nashville's leading citizens, and she had received numerous prestigious honors, including the International Association of Women Students' National Athene Award and recognition as Woman of the Year by the Nashville Seroptimists Club, Zonta Club of Nashville, the *Nashville Banner*, and the Davidson County Business and Professional Women's Club; and

WHEREAS, she was also honored as Professional Woman of the Year by the Women Executives of Nashville, and she is still the only woman ever to have received the Insurance Executive of the Year Award from the Nashville Association of Insurance Women; and

WHEREAS, recently, the Tennessee Bar Association selected Osta Underwood as one of a select few "Pioneer Women in Law;" and

WHEREAS, an active and devout Christian, Miss Underwood was a lifelong member of the Belmont Heights Baptist Church, which she served faithfully for many years as a Sunday School teacher and member of numerous committees on the congregational level; and

WHEREAS, always listening to the Lord's call and seeking his direction, she served as President of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and as a member of the Board of Trustees of Baptist Hospital; and

WHEREAS, Miss Underwood was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family and community values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, she will be greatly missed by her sister-in-law, Evelyn Underwood; two nieces, Sydney U. Rogers, and Paula U. Winters; great-niece, Alyson B. Arnold; great-nephews, Phillip E. Bennett, Ryan Winters, and Derek D. Winters; and great-great-niece, Savannah Hope Bennett; and

WHEREAS, Osta Underwood leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Miss Underwood was a true embodiment of the venerable ideals of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State"; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Osta M. Underwood, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character, her dedicated service to her fellow citizens, and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and many friends of Miss Underwood.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.